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HOW MUCH PRESS DO YOU NEED TO COVER A WAR?

by

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Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

With over 1600 reporters in Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm, a U.S. media market not yet saturated with broadcast/print vehicles, and communication technology giving the press faster dissemination than real-time intelligence, the military commander's dilemma with the press will get worse before it gets better. The dilemma -- how to cooperate with a press demanding free and open access to the battlefield, while orchestrating all efforts toward mission accomplishment and troop safety.

The last several U.S. military engagements have rekindled the debate over military censorship of the press, with direct reference to limiting the media's access to combat areas. The National Media Pool was instituted in 1985 to address previous inadequacies, but some subsequent failures demonstrate this pool is not the complete solution. This paper addresses both media and operational commander's concerns over the numbers of journalists with access to the battlefield, preceded by a brief recap of how this dilemma evolved through America's wars, then recommends some actions necessary to improve this reporting environment.

To preface this examination, the reader must recognize the basics to the argument. "There are two requirements: the requirement that the government conduct effective military operations, and the requirement that the public, via a free press, be independently informed about the actions of its government."[1] The responsibilities of the press in a competitive business environment sway the solutions to offer maximum access; the responsibilities of the military to execute national policy with minimum casualties require disciplined control over the combat environment. How much press do you need to report a war? The DoD must walk a fine line not to violate 'freedom of the press,' while providing directives giving the operational commander the situational control he/she needs to execute his/her hazardous obligation.

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[1]Jerry W. Friedheim, "How the Public Can Win the Military-Media Battle," Editor & Publisher, 25 Apr 92, p.3.

CHAPTER II - HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Since our Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution over 200 years ago, the document has continually been challenged, argued and modified. Any change to this document represents a firm statement on behalf of the nation's citizens -- the First Amendment, the first change enacted, represents a fundamental priority in the freedoms guaranteed by this nation's pioneers. Freedom of speech, and the accompanying freedom of the press, without regard to specific interpretations, was an attempt by these forefathers to permit a free exchange of information, independent of government control. This freedom of expression has conflicted to some extent with our government's strong arm of diplomacy, the military, in almost every combat operation in our history.

From Independence Until the 20th Century

As early as the American Revolution, the media played a role in covering soldiers under arms. Both sides used the press as a coercive tool to bolster internal support and attempt to break the morale of the enemy. There was no such thing as a field reporter -- they printed the available news, but attempted to slant it to their audience. Articles published were not cleared through the military, however, and careless printing of potentially damaging military information led General George Washington to complain to the president of Congress,

> "It is much to be wished that our printers were more discreet in many of their Publications. We see almost in every Paper, Proclamations or accounts transmitted by the Enemy, of an injurious nature. If some hint or caution could be given them on the Subject, it might be of Material Service."[1]

The War of 1812 saw little change in the nature of media reports, not written from personal account, not cleared through military sources, yet still slanted to promote an American triumph.

By the war with Mexico (1846-1848), our media had seen a significant modification. The advent of the penny press saw papers building large circulations, the timeliness of news becoming a factor in competition for sales. During the war, the race for access to telegraph lines became a press priority. Papers were no longer a one-man venture, but an editor with field reporters -- this led to the first war correspondent, George Kendall, sent to the front by the New Orleans Picay-

[1]John Tebbel and Sarah Miles Watts, The Press and the Presidency (New York: Oxford Univ Press, 1985), p.8.

une. Kendall joined a military unit, took up arms, and was once wounded in action; his reporting was pro-military, uncensored and provided a new bond for the public to the soldier in the field.[2]

The Civil War saw a proliferation of telegraph lines, railroads, and a vast expansion of media war correspondents -- 500 correspondents reported for the North alone. Reporters in the war between the states faced significant limitations, though, as leaders on both sides mistrusted the loyalties of the press. President Lincoln imprisoned several reporters he suspected of supporting the Confederate cause. Generals Sherman and Halleck repeatedly barred the press from certain of their operations.[3] The government became active in censorship, yet never established any regulations as guidance to reporters.[4]

The Spanish-American War provided the first insight into the press using the print vehicle to drive government policy. Reporters sent to Cuba to cover tensions found it difficult to gather any information because the Spanish barred them from the war zone. This frustration led the New York Journal's lead reporter to telegraph, "Everything is quiet...There will be no war. I wish to return." His editor, Randolph Hearst's, famous reply was, "Please remain. You furnish pictures. I will furnish war."[5] The ensuing war became a media event, with press boats continually transiting the battle area to access cable lines.[6]

The World Wars

With America's long evolutionary involvement in World War I, the press found themselves operating under new rules -- again, those imposed by the foreign governments who controlled the scene of combat. In the early stage of the war, limited access to military operations held a new danger for the neutral American reporter seeking battlefront news -- any correspondent transiting the lines could be executed as a spy upon return to the British side. Once America joined the war effort, the government was intimately involved in the effort to control the media. World War I saw the birth of the accreditation system, created to select the correspondents the government preferred to cover the action. Chosen reporters swore to convey the truth, provided an

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[2]Joseph J. Mathews, Reporting the Wars (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1957), p.55.
[3]Winant Sidle, "The Public's Right to Know," Proceedings, July 1985, p. 39.
[4]Mathews, p. 84.
[5]Phillip Knightley, The First Casualty (New York: Harcourt Brace Javonovich, 1975), pp. 55-56.
[6]Ibid., p. 56.

autobiographical sketch, paid the Army $1,000 to cover equipment and supplies, and their sponsor posted a $10,000 bond to ensure the correspondent's adherence to the military's established standards.[7] The strict standards and censorship of the Wilson administration amounted to the first time American war coverage could be categorized as 'propaganda.'

Censorship and accreditation remained the standard for the government's media plan as the U.S. entered World War II. President Roosevelt handpicked the reporters who would accompany troops into the field. However, the mobilization of effort that typified the American response to this war bled into the press corps as well. The press understood itself to be part of the war effort; reporters traveled with units, used military supplies and equipment, and were considered part of the combat organization. Yet even with the country's total mobilization, the amount of media for this two front, global effort remained reasonable and manageable. Six hundred reporters covered the entire Pacific theater -- in the European theater of operations, less than 400 press covered the war zone, 192 of which were assigned to pools for ease of transportation along the battlefield. General Eisenhower was keenly aware of the benefits of positive media relations, was held in high regard by the press, and yet managed the incredible Normandy invasion with thorough admiration by all media accounts, with 27 correspondents covering the operation.

Perhaps it was the support of the American public in World War II, or just clever leadership and an awareness of media relations, but this war demonstrated the height of cooperation between the military and the press. The cultural revolution of the 1940s and 1950s saw a growing mutual mistrust between the two professions.

Korea/Vietnam Turning Point

Press coverage of the Korean conflict initially enjoyed the benefit of the positive note on which World War II ended. The military trusted the press, the press supported the U.S. effort, and a 'no censorship' environment existed. Correspondents were again dependent on the military for all transportation and communication support. In 1951, however, there was a reversal of trust, not clearly defined as either the administration's insecurity with their own policy or the press' progression toward a more questioning line on U.S. policy. In any event, the military resumed

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[7]Ibid., p. 24.

controlling media access to information and implemented a 'censorship' policy to review reports before they were sent. Journalists, in the end, succumbed to the pressure and reported according to the military's rules out of respect for American loyalty.[8]

Regardless of any animosity the Korea circumstance might carry to the Vietnam conflict, the entire situation was fertile ground for a split in cooperation among the professions. A government which could not articulate its objectives, a military which could not explain its concept of victory because it had no objectives, a populace with a growing dislike of the combat effort -- the press would have little positive to report, even if they were so inclined. The government could not officially impose any censorship program as it had not declared war. The military did establish a loose accreditation program, based on a reporter having two sponsors and agreeing to some ground rules. Correspondents were free to roam the country, but the South Vietnamese government watched them closely, and could expel anyone it was unhappy with. Reporter reliance on military transportation to the action limited front line reports, required reporter solicitation of area commanders, and developed into a pooling system. Even with limited restrictions on media access, the number of press personnel was manageable. In March 1968, 647 reporters were accredited, an average of 300 were in country on a given day, and only 75-80 of these were regularly in the field.[9] The military's relationship with these reporters seemed to deteriorate from the leadership's perspective. As reporters had access to the troops, they wrote about field conditions, soldiers' attitudes, and gave insight into the horrors of guerrilla war. These stories had little positive to say, reflecting the frustration of the troops in the field, yet led military commanders to lose all faith in media objectivity. Because of no censorship, the negative accounts had some effect on U.S. public support for a protracted conflict; this led to military leadership saddling the press with much of the blame for our less than victorious withdrawal, and left a legacy of hostility between the professions. As the U.S. military again became an instrument of national policy in the Reagan years, the military-media relationship was perhaps at its historic low.

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[8]Ibid., p. 356.
[9]Derrik Mercer et al., The Fog of War: The Media on the Battlefield (London: Heinemann, 1987), p. 254.

The Last 12 Years

The first significant use of U.S. troops in a combat operation since Vietnam came in October 1983, when President Reagan directed military action in support of American students and a friendly island government facing insurgent Communist Cubans on Grenada. Any dormant anguish between the military and the press was immediately sparked to full animosity with Vice Admiral Metcalf's (task force commander) decision to block media access to the island until combat operations were over. About 700 media personnel gathered on neighboring Barbados awaiting access to the fighting -- after 48 hours, 15 reporters were brought to Grenada to record the finishing touches. Although the public supported the military's excuse of secrecy, the press outcry over the total blackout prompted the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff(CJCS), General Vessey, in 1984 to form a commission, headed by Vietnam military spokesman Major General (ret) Winant Sidle, to study the question, "How do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of a military operation while keeping the American public informed through the media?"[10] (Recommendations at Appendix 1)

A key concept resulting from this commission was to codify use of the media pool as a feasible means of providing early access for a maximum number of reporters, then subsequently opening the area to full coverage. Although pools were used previously, they were primarily formed to maximize scarce transportation resources. This new plan started the DoD National Media Pool, comprised of alerted, accredited, Washington D.C. area press using formal procedures to join a military operation at its origin. After several exercises, and an uneventful pool use in the Persian Gulf missile boat incident, the first real test of this pool was in Panama.

The National Media Pool was activated with commencement of Operation Just Cause. Fourteen journalists and two technicians (to facilitate satellite uplink) were alerted, and flew from Andrews AFB, Maryland to Howard AFB, Panama, to cover the operation, but arrived four hours after H-hour. Subsequent to first day coverage, press from around the world descended upon this small country, and by day four the pool was deactivated -- more than 1,100 journalists were handled by military public affairs during Operation Just Cause. Press consensus following combat

[10]Sidle, p. 37.

in Panama was that the pool concept had failed -- the pool was too late in arriving (by military design, since the pool was not delayed after the alert), they were not transported to the sight of any action (partially due to prioritization of combat helicopter resources), and they were too controlled by the military (limited access to combat, limited dedicated communication equipment).[11]

In the aftermath of Panama, Secretary of Defense Cheney directed his Assistant for Public Affairs, who tasked noted journalist Mr. Fred Hoffman, to research the questioned press operation. Mr. Hoffman came up with 17 recommendations (Appendix 2) which culminated in a CJCS message providing new guidance to commanders. The message outlined the minimum support commanders were expected to provide to the press pool. This support meant daily briefings, providing ...neraries, transportation, housing and food, and providing access to combat areas, key command and staff personnel, and planning. This direction was the guidance in effect as we entered our most recent conflict, the Gulf War.

The August 1990 commencement of Desert Shield saw a successful deployment of the National Media Pool. Yet the evolution of the size of this pending operation compared most closely to Vietnam, and the memories of the desert commanders who fought that conflict were determined not to recreate the media setting. As a result of General Schwarzkopf's Vietnam recall, coupled with host Saudi Arabia's cultural concerns, CENTCOM developed rules on media access and war coverage guidelines significantly restricting the press' ability for free coverage.

Although public polls consistently showed Americans very satisfied with news coverage in the desert, the press charged that the military violated agreements on coverage principles, and censored coverage by restricting access. Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams justifies the control over the press, saying "...with hundreds of fiercely independent reporters seeking to join up with combat units, we concluded that when the combat started, we'd have no choice but to rely on pools."[12] In fact, at the beginning of the ground war, about 1600 journalists were in Saudi Arabia, the pool system only capable of accommodating 800 of them. Those not assigned to pools had restricted access to the front lines, so gathered their data primarily from press briefings.

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[11]Bernard E.Trainor, "The Military and the Media: A Troubled Embrace," Parameters, December 1990, pp.10; George Garneau, "Military Press Pool Misses Most of the Action," Editor & Publisher, 6 January 1990, p.84.
[12]Pete Williams, "The Press and the Persian Gulf War," Parameters, Autumn 1991, p.6.

The limited access, coupled with a requirement for all filed reports to be cleared by a military security review, prompted Pentagon admission of too much press control, a post-Gulf War review, and subsequent new set of guiding principles for media access (Appendix 3). The first test of this new attempt at appeasement came with Operation Restore Hope in Somalia.

If Desert Storm could be categorized as one extreme in the military's application of press control, Restore Hope demonstrates the other extreme in the media's lack of self-control. In a humanitarian relief effort offering low probability of anticipated resistance to U.S. amphibious forces, DoD saw an opportunity to mend some fences with the media and encouraged press coverage to cast the mission in a positive light. More than 75 reporters and camera crews were waiting on the beach, microphones and lights on, cameras rolling, when SEALs and Marines arrived. NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw reported the troops were not amused because the lights affected their night-vision goggles; ABC's Ted Koppel said the most hostile force the troops encountered was the throng of journalists.[13]

What made this military operation look more like a movie set seemed to be a lack of understanding between the professions. The public affairs plan included over 20 journalists who prepared with the Marines, and actually participated in the amphibious assault.[14] The military assumed this would give the desired up front coverage, and invited the other correspondents to watch the landing from the airport terminal. The open press, having been invited to cover a landing, sought prime footage, faces, names and interviews -- not understanding night-vision and maneuver schemes as part of landing operations, and not being restricted through ground rules, they were just trying for a better story. With both professions attempting to do their job with respect for the other, we still saw a failure in how much press is needed to cover an operation.

From this point of both actors misunderstanding each other's motivation and professional responsibility, the next step is examining this problem of access to the battlefield from separate perspectives.

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[13]James Barron, "Live, and in Great Numbers: It's Somalia Tonight With Tom, Ted and Dan," The New York Times, 9 December 1992, p. A17.

[14]Charles W. Ricks, The Military-News Media Relationship: Thinking Forward (US Army War College: Strategic Studies Institute, 1993), p.11.

CHAPTER III - FROM THE MEDIA'S SIDE

The media's view of the issue of access to the battlefield stems both from interpretation of the First Amendment and from the nature of news reporting as a competitive business. For military leaders to grasp the legitimacy of the media's demands to cover U.S. forces in battle, it is imperative to view journalism as a profession and understand the motivation for access from the reporter's outlook.

Constitutional Right

The Constitution's First Amendment is generally paraphrased as guaranteeing freedom of speech and freedom of the press. First Amendment wording states, "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech or of the press," and Supreme Court rulings on this amendment determine its intent "to give liberty of the press...the broadest scope that could be countenanced in an orderly society."[1] General media interpretation of this guidance is absolute freedom as the government watchdog -- a responsibility to uncover and publish the truth of government actions. Yet, as a matter of interpretation, does freedom of the press provide for unlimited access -- could the forefathers have possibly foreseen the volume of press vehicles sported by today's marketplace?

So the question being examined here -- how much press is necessary -- can be framed in the right to access. Most military leaders do not dispute the freedom of the press in the most basic interpretation, but see a need to control access and numbers in a combat situation. Yet the media feel any restriction to access impedes their freedom under an alternate interpretation of the First Amendment. An American Legal Foundation evaluation found the preponderance of court cases consistently upheld the right of the press to publish information it has obtained, but no absolute right to have access to the news.[2] The further implication, which seems currently to have no support in case law, is that the media may not have Constitutional guarantees to send unlimited numbers of press to cover a combat situation.

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[1]Sidle, p. 39.
[2]Ibid., p.39.

Another philosophical difference highlights the dichotomy between the military and the media -- they approach their professions from a different prospective. "The military requires subservience of the individual to the needs of the group, while the media prize independent initiative above all else."[3]

A Competitive Industry - Personal Motivation

Journalists learn from day one that, despite motivations not driven by fame and fortune, producing news is a business. Journalistic goals focus on individual achievement, ranging from the award of the Pulitzer Prize to emulating the numerous successful examples of career making exposure, such as Rather from Vietnam or Woodward from Watergate. This significance of individual accomplishment drives the emphasis on being first with a story -- the scoop -- or exposing wrongdoing. Thus, the personal motivation is "how to protect your byline or get your face on television," leading the Desert Storm media chief to categorize the individual competition as a "lack of cooperation among the journalists, each fighting for himself, often to the detriment of his colleagues."[4]

Certainly the most dynamic and desired stories during combat come from the front lines, in the midst of combat action. Therefore, as the most recent armed experiences show, the increasing trend is for individual reporters to employ their ingenuity and gain access to forward units. But the motivation to get the unique combat perspective results not only from personal recognition -- it is ultimately driven by the competition among media vehicles.

A Competitive Industry - The Number of News Sources

The public appetite for news has grown astonishingly over the last twenty years with the introduction of new communications technology and 24 hour dedicated news services. Accordingly, media vehicles have grown to a number where all cannot be equally profitable. This has driven a new standard in competition -- and a separation in styles of news broadcast. For visual news we can get CNN and major network live coverage (immediate, with no analysis),

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[3]Peter Andrews, "The Media and the Military," American Heritage, July/August 1991, p.78.
[4]David Lamb, "Pentagon Hardball," Washington Journalism Review, April 1991, p.35.

nightly news programs (24 hours worth of events with minor analysis), weekend 'Meet the Press' style issue examinations (deeper analysis), and periodic investigative magazine shows (in depth analysis). For print we choose from wire service bulletins (immediate, no analysis), daily newspapers both national and local (24 hours of events, minor analysis plus editorials), weekly newspapers/magazines (deeper analysis), monthly journals/magazines (in depth analysis), and book historians (thorough analysis). This breakdown credits only legitimate sources of news, and does not cover the tabloid/sensationalist publications, of which almost 300 of the 700 reporters seeking access to Grenada in 1983 represented.[5] Among each of these styles of news, intense competition exists for sales and advertising dollars. This competition manifests itself in each news vehicle's desire to have its own journalist on the scene in search of that unique perspective sought by their target audience.

Another aspect of the intense competition is that it has evolved less with an emphasis on accuracy, and more along the lines of speed. Whether artificially or through profit analysis, the media industry equates the scoop with higher sales, which of course means greater profits, and, in business, is the foundation of free enterprise. But, according to internationally acclaimed press photographer Brian Wolff, "Who says good journalism is fast? Good journalism is not fast."[6] This was echoed by Walter Cronkite, saying "I don't see what this rush to print, or this rush to transmit, is all about. It doesn't really matter in a wartime situation if we learn something this minute...or the next day."[7] Still, as long as the speed to broadcast/print is the industry measure of success, news executives will want their own reporter on scene (and on the hook to his employer) to generate the fast story. Of course this adds volumes of journalists seeking access to battle.

Military operations are not unique in popularity when examining competition for audience. The press are able to handle many other events in a self-regulating fashion -- the major difference lies in the nature of our free enterprise system. Several times a year the major networks divide the tasks of covering events such as the Super Bowl, the Olympics, the Academy Awards via the

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[5]Sidle, p.42.
[6]Fred L. Schultz, "Tangled in Wires and Networks," Proceedings, August 1991, p.77.
[7]Renaldo R. Keene, "Dealing With the Media," Proceedings, August 1991, p.68.

enterprise of buying coverage rights. While it is certainly inconceivable for the government to bid out coverage rights for a war, the precedent is established where press share information, footage, and written reports. The White House Press Room has one camera, video shared by all networks; independent photographers sell to all interested print vehicles; several news services wire continuous reports to subscribing papers. Profit-motivated competition, however, seems ignore any self-regulation when it comes to our military in combat, thus the number of journalists seeking access to the battlefield continues to grow.

The Media and Pools

As was mentioned in Chapter 1, press pooling grew from the military's failure to recognize the media's responsibilities, and honor their demands, to cover U.S. combat action. The media has been cautiously tolerant of pools -- they seem to appreciate the difficulties in conducting hazardous military activities, yet insist on their right to provide immediate coverage of front line units. The media see pools as a method of timely access to the initiation of a combat operation, but once journalists have an opportunity to reach the combat location autonomously, pools lose their function. The military abused the pool concept in Desert Storm -- several Pentagon officials and military officers told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that the Gulf War restrictions went beyond what was needed.[8] The press was almost unanimously dissatisfied with Gulf War conditions.

Aspects of pool operations contributing to press dissatisfaction include timeliness of pool reports. The competitive environment previously mentioned cannot deal with pooled information, to which every news source has simultaneous access[9] -- bringing further pressure for early dissolution of pools. Limited military logistics support introduces an equitability issue -- bitterness develops on behalf of pool reporters who were first on the scene, but must sacrifice the support they received the first couple of days when resources and efforts are diverted to new press arriving in theater. Some reporters feel each pool member "is an unpaid employee of the

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[8]Jacqueline E. Sharkey, "The Media's War," The Nation, 11 May 1992, p.617.
[9]Richard Zoglin, "Jumping Out of the Pool," Time, 18 February 1991, p.39.

Department of Defense, on whose behalf he or she prepares the news of the war for the outer world."[10]

Yet another consideration intertwined with the pool concept is the size and scope of the operation to be covered. Military planners in the post-Cold War world project operations other than war to span a spectrum of quick, very small actions, through a low scale, open ended humanitarian action (Somalia), to a major regional contingency of considerable length like Desert Storm. The press have yet to view any military action in terms of its scope, as that does not serve its interests -- if U.S. forces are in combat, whether a small skirmish or total war, it is a story everyone wants to cover. Press pools limit this desired access.

[10]Malcolm W. Browne, "The Military vs. The Press," The New York Times Magazine, 3 March 1991, p.27.

CHAPTER IV - THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE

General Eisenhower captured the dichotomy of military-media tasks when he told reporters in 1944,

> "The first essential in military operations is that no information of value shall be given to the enemy. The first essential in newspaper work and broadcasting is wide-open publicity. It is your job and mine to try to reconcile those sometimes diverse considerations."[1]

The operational commander must balance his combat task, his responsibility to minimize danger and harm to all involved, and his place in a democracy where civilians are the authority for military actions to the pleasure of the electorate, in order to succeed in all endeavors. The proliferation of journalists seeking access to the battlefield has compounded all problems for the commander -- his concerns must blend solutions to both sides of the issue.

Mission Accomplishment versus Security

Military leaders rise to responsible positions resulting from a healthy respect for the priority of their missions. As expected, Admiral Metcalf, Task Force Commander for the Grenada operation which excluded press coverage, defended his actions in a black-and-white view when he wrote,

> "...no one in his right mind would question that it is the responsibility of a military commander--and this includes the Commander in Chief--to protect the lives of combat forces going into battle and to ensure the maximum chances of success, not to ensure the maximum news coverage of the action. Indeed, military commanders who courted headlines have always been held in contempt."[2]

This view fails to recognize a commander's equal responsibility to the highest levels of authority to carry out his mission with respect to national and foreign policy, and securing the public's support -- issues which proper media coverage enhances.

As General Eisenhower pointed out in this chapter's opening quote, military commanders consistently fear compromise of an operation based on press release of sensitive information. Where no historical proof exists tying press reports to giving away an operation, examples of

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[1]Friedheim, p.5.
[2]A.G.B. Metcalf, "The Media as Supergovernment," Strategic Review, Winter 1984, p.5.

good and bad journalist actions with respect to security and the *potential* consequences are easily found. In June 1951, Newsweek published the 8th Army order of battle in Korea[3] aiding a potential enemy defense plan, and during Desert Storm, ABC's report that an Iraqi Scud detonating over Israel contained confirmed chemical agents almost put Israel in the war.[4] Some analysts assert that under today's rules of journalistic ethics, preparations for the D-day invasion would have surely been exposed.[5] Yet the press is to be commended for the security of Overlord, as they knew full details, even covered the Operation Tiger rehearsal without filing a report -- much of which is due to the rapport the commander built with them. Newsrooms knew of the 1986 planned airstrikes on Libya and held the news so as not to endanger the aircrews. Every Washington reporter knew of hostage-Marine Lieutenant Colonel Higgins' sensitive Defense Department job prior to his Lebanon assignment, yet no mention of it was made in the American press in hopes that his captors would remain ignorant of this possibly compromising information.[6]

What these examples show are there are some good and some bad journalists. True, some reporters just cannot grasp how releasing certain information will aid the enemy or endanger our troops, but the vast majority of correspondents honor every military ground rule out of respect for security. The recent military approach seems to deduce that one way of limiting the number of bad reporters is to limit the number of total reporters. This is not a justified solution, however. Commanders and media must find the way to identify the bad actors so as not to jeopardize access for greatest practical number of good actors.

Accuracy and Live Reporting

Accuracy is a concern of reputable journalists as well as military commanders. But a report lacking accuracy will cost a commander much valuable time in his attempt to set the record straight, where the reporter is on to new efforts. President Bush's White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater reflected during the Gulf War, "I spent more time putting out fires than dealing

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[3]"Blood Battle for Red Buildup Base," Newsweek, 18 June 1951, p.26.
[4]Keene, p.70.
[5]James F. Pontuso, "Combat and the Media: The Right to Know Versus the Right to Win," Strategic Review, Winter 1990, p.53.
[6]Trainor, pp.8-9.

with real information."[7] Many times unreliable information is reported because the competition game pressures the correspondent for speed. "The words of a reporter for a national news syndicate best sum it up...'I don't care if I get it right; I only care if I get it first.'"[8]

Inaccuracy is often deliberate -- a reporter out to paint a deliberately unfair picture of a person or unit. This situation is almost impossible to prevent, and the best solution is to identify the bad actors and not deal with them. "An unscrupulous journalist will never last on a reputable paper, nor will advertisers... place ads in papers with a reputation for unfair reporting."[9] These underhanded reporters are few, and the accreditation system should be an effective tool to deny them access and prevent their return to combat areas.

Still, the commander must take measures to facilitate accuracy in reporting. The Sidle panel recommendations state that the news media should be one of two sources of information for the public, the other one being the government.[10] The live press briefing, used masterfully during Desert Shield/Storm, is the commander's tool to impart total accuracy. It recognizes the competitive environment, gives favor to no one, and by its live nature, passes information directly to the audience, negating any opportunity for 'spin' analysis.

Let's turn now from the commander's concern regarding his troops, his mission, and the reports going out about his operation, to the commander's concern for the journalist in the theater of operations.

Safety of the Media

Journalists frequently make the point that covering combat is dangerous; they understand this and many accept the risk. During Gulf War planning several bureau chiefs informed the Pentagon that the security of reporters was no concern of the government. But spokesman Pete Williams says it is unrealistic to ignore the moral dilemma posed by such a suggestion.[11] U.S.

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[7]David E. Rosenbaum, "Press and U.S. Officials at Odds on News Curbs," The New York Times, 20 January 1991, p.16.
[8]Browne, p.30.
[9]Trainor, pp. 7-8.
[10]Sidle, p.38.
[11]Williams, p.8.

media representatives are usually U.S. citizens, and commanders and troops cannot help but assume responsibility for their safety in a combat zone, as they do for anyone who is not an enemy combatant. But certainly the greater the number of reporters, the more difficult the effort to secure their safety.

Reinforcing the military's duty-bound feeling for press safety, news media executives have been quick to demand assistance when their correspondents find trouble. Several recent examples of journalists in distress brought direct and immediate calls for military aid or rescue -- frequently to bail-out those who refused to abide by established rules. Despite networks insisting their reporters be given access to the most violent scenes of battle in Panama, the president of CBS repeatedly called the Pentagon to implore that his journalists held hostage by Noriega's security forces in the Panama City Marriott be rescued by the U.S. military.[12] Reporters trapped in a Mogadishu hotel in 1993 generated a request for military assistance. The infamous Bob Simon with his CBS news crew, who crossed the desert into Iraqi capture, produced a daily conversation between CBS News and the Pentagon. "And when a group of U.S. journalists was captured in Iraq after the cease-fire, four news industry executives wrote to the President, saying that *no* U.S. forces should withdraw from Iraq until the issue of the journalists was resolved."[13] So certainly a commander must prepare for the media's security, both those working with him and those he cannot reach.

One further aspect of press safety views hazards not from the enemy, but from and to friendly troops. With 25% of Gulf coalition casualties resulting from friendly fire incidents, what level of risk occurs when the media is free to roam the battlefront? To skirt the rules in the Gulf, many journalists disguised themselves as soldiers;[14] this not only increases the risk from enemy fire, but entails a risk for friendly engaged troops who may rely on support from a sighted ally, only to discover the shooting he provides comes from a camera. Or if our enemy knows our press

[12]Pontuso, p.52.
[13]Williams, pp.8-9.
[14]Zoglin, p.39.

is free to transit our front lines in commercial four-wheel drives, would he not be tempted to 'contact' our troops in the same manner?

Safety of the press corps, then, is a real consideration for the commander -- one compounded by a proliferation of those desiring access. But more than just providing for their safety, the military also accepts some burden for supporting journalists in the theater of operations.

Support of the Press Corps

In an effort to control the battlefield environment, thus enhancing mission success, commanders seek to manage all facets of the surroundings -- ultimately this also includes the press. Of course, once any aspect of media access is influenced, the military assumes some responsibility for supporting these individuals. No other country goes to such lengths to support reporters of all varieties in covering its military.[15]

The extent of support required and/or offered depends greatly on the circumstances under which the journalist is in the field. Greater support is given to the pool journalist and the reporter assigned to travel with a unit, than that to a free-lancer who arrives at a unit unannounced. A CJCS message after Operation Just Cause gave commanders guidance on what support would be provided to the National Media Pool:

> "Required support may include, but may not be limited to A) existing contingency airlift from CONUS to Area of Operations and return, B) theater ground, sea and air transportation to allow for pool coverage of operations, C) messing and billeting, D) issuance of any gear considered appropriate to the situation, E) access to communications facilities to file stories on an expedited basis, and F) medical support as required.[16]

The free-lance reporter could not expect as much, but certainly messing, gear and medical would be the least effort extended. So a commander must logistically plan to accommodate at least those journalists assigned to his units.

Media requests for material support are usually less than what the military tries to provide, but transportation and communication support rarely meets the demand. Marine public affairs

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[15]James H. Webb, Jr., "The Military and the Media," Marine Corps Gazette, November 1984, p.34.
[16]CJCS 182305Z May 1990 Message, "DoD National Media Pool Planning Requirements", p.2.

officers in the Gulf War said their biggest concern was delivering media pool products several hundred kilometers from the battlefield to the distribution point with the immediacy to which today's media are accustomed.[17] Also in the Gulf, each commander had a limited number of vehicles, thus seats -- most could accommodate their assigned reporters, but could never have been expected to absorb those arriving on their own.[18]

In-country reporters pose another logistical problem -- one not experienced in Saudi Arabia, but one partially confronted in Panama. When field correspondents have set their function in an area prior to introduction of U.S. military troops, they certainly provide the press with immediate access to combat. These correspondents, however, will need communications support for filing stories, and will somehow need to obtain accreditation if they desire contact with U.S. troops. How can the commander facilitate this support when he is in the first hours of battle?

Without question, the operational commander must plan for security and support of media, whether their access is provided by pool, or free-lancers pursue their quest independently. The problem lies in the numbers of journalists seeking total freedom.

The Military on Pools/Numbers

Willing to incur the burden for entire support, the military generally likes press pools as the compromise alternative to no media access, because it allows for ease in transport, support and control of the battlefield environment. Many valid examples exist supporting press accusations that pools provide universal censorship opportunities, so no bad stories portray our troops in combat. Results of the most recent military-media conferences seem to accept a lesser need for censorship, but commanders still want some ability to ensure no operational security is breached by the press. These conferences have recognized the press desire for open coverage, but even through Desert Storm, they worded the ground rules to continue pools until the military situation allowed open coverage -- an interpretation the commander could control. The post-Vietnam media proliferation

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[17]John M. Shotwell, "The Fourth Estate as a Force Multiplier," Marine Corps Gazette, July 1991, p.77.
[18]Williams, p.7.

provides the bulk of the problem as seen by the military -- the numbers outside of pooling are too great to deal with!

Examples of the numbers issue are unfortunately consistent, but seem to cause less concern among media executives than among commanders. Disproportional press contingents cannot help but preoccupy, or endanger, front line units. If just the 400 legitimate journalists (of the 700 total) trying to get to Grenada in 1983 had secured access, they would have equaled the number of Cubans on the island.[19] September of 1983 saw 330 reporters covering our 1200 marines in Lebanon -- one reporter for every three to four troops, and this was an environment anticipated to be benign.[20] More than 75 news crew greeted, and 20 correspondents accompanied, the SEALs and marines landing on a narrow Somali beach in December 1993. Even in larger operations, media saturation is a problem, particularly in units who have a 'romantic' mission. "The Apache unit of the 82d Airborne Division [in the Gulf] was so overwhelmed by reporters one week that the pilots had no time to fly their helicopters; ...[subsequently,] media visits to the division were suspended.[21] These examples underscore the military's motive to retain pooling.

An alternate military perspective would, however, offer a case for maximum feasible numbers. The more reporters, the better the opportunity to make the average conditions of the average serviceman and woman visible, and thus encourage public support.[22] The greater the number of local affiliates and publications in theater, the greater the number of human interest stories good for both hometown and troop morale. So cutting press access indiscriminately may not serve the optimum needs of the military, either.

The latest guidance now directs that pools will not be the standard for covering military operations, but will be used when this is the only method of providing initial coverage (see Appendix 3). This was a view forwarded during the 1984 Sidle Commission by Fred Hoffman, a 20-year Associated Press reporter, then DoD information office executive who was tasked with

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[19]Sidle, p.42.
[20]Webb, p.35.
[21]Lamb, p.35.
[22]Webb, p.34.

drawing up the policy directing the Commission's findings. Mr. Hoffman felt pools were only warranted covering initial stages of combat in remote locations with no in-country reporters.[23] What these caveats continue to point out is that all combat operations are unique, different in size, scope, and environment. The policy -- or the continuing search -- seeks an easy way to encompass all contingencies to both parties' satisfaction. Perhaps the ultimate solution is not so easy.

[23]Pontuso, p.54.

CHAPTER V - CONCLUSIONS

Clearly both the military and the media bear the burden of this paradox. Military operations in support of our foreign policy define our international status, and defend our national security objectives; strict respect for the guaranteed freedoms of our Constitution define democracy and our way of life. Neither side's assertions should impinge on the responsible execution of the other's task.

So what can we conclude in examining these concerns, which will hopefully suggest a more mutually satisfactory solution? Some realities must frame -- and preface -- any suggestions for improving today's military-media guidance. First, all must agree that press coverage *is* a Constitutional right; the media has the right to publish what they feel they are responsibly entitled to publish. A second point must have the military acquiescing that the press should be permitted to cover all military operations (with a possible exception of covert special operations) in accordance with their professional responsibility. Contrarily, the third point must secure a media realization that *unlimited* numbers of journalists on the battlefield is unnecessary, hazardous, and provides an obstacle to military mission accomplishment, their professional responsibility.

A further issue, which directly impacts the 'numbers needed' question posed in this paper, and one on which history has shown neither side will agree, is that of the *type* of access reporters should have. The reality in post-Desert Storm guidelines recognizes the press will roam the battlefield freely -- the media preference to remain uncontrolled. However, introducing an accuracy concern, a military position from one Strategic Studies Institute author suggests:

> "Reporters working outside a unit possess limited utility as they are only able to gather images of what is happening and provide their own interpretations. Those included in the units are valuable to both the news media and the military as they tend to produce more accurate, complete, and informative stories because of their access to those who are performing the mission."[1]

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[1]Ricks, pp.10-11.

A feasible solution should consider both. Certain circumstances will permit free-lance reporters, but accuracy will be enhanced with those who are absorbed into the units.

Both sides must accept some responsibility for solving this predicament. The military must cease efforts to inhibit media access, and abandon the 'us versus them' attitude. Current arrangements for media pools must be retained to provide otherwise impossible access. By the same token, the military cannot go to the other extreme to win favor, and must not sacrifice mission accomplishment efforts to support journalists. For even with the press brought in a pool at the start of an operation, the services "have no obligation to the pool other than to get them to the scene of the action and brief them on the situation."[2] The military must be responsible to understand today's demands for immediate news transmission, and must facilitate communications aid to exploit modern technology in assisting reporters, but with care not to violate a neutral position in the competitive environment.

Lastly, the media plays a large part in assuming responsibility for improvements. The press must recognize the unacceptable burden unlimited access places on the military in a volatile, hostile environment. They must assist in determining a method to limit the number of journalists flocking to combat operations.

With these precursors, the bold can then make an attempt at recommending a solution to the 'numbers needed' problem.

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[2]Trainor, p.10.

CHAPTER VI - RECOMMENDATIONS

In approaching solutions to this complex issue, the temptation is to devise a formula which calculates or defines a prescribed press contingent for all contingencies. This is exactly the wrong way to approach a solution due to the variables involved in this issue. The military uses a dynamic planning process to determine the right mix and size of forces for any contingency, recognizing the unique environment that every use of force will present. Therefore, regulating press numbers to numbers of troops, types of media coverage, location of the operation, etc., would not be justifiable because of the particular circumstances surrounding each event. The unique conditions possible drive my first recommendation: define stages of conflicts to which an evolution of media access can be aligned. I do not intend to determine the specifics -- these should be defined by a military-media commission. The concept is to mirror the 'spectrum of conflict' taught at military schools, specific to media consideration, yet simple to execute. An example is:

Stage 1 - Grenada style conflict, anticipated 48-72 hour duration, small hostile force to deal with, expect few casualties ⇒ pool access only, size determined by types of media requesting, feasible military transport
Stage 2 - Panama intervention/Somalia humanitarian style, longer anticipated duration (up to 3 months), larger resistance expected, moderate casualties ⇒ initial pool access, transitioning to limited open coverage after initial military objective achieved, size determined by same factors
Stage 3 - Full scale buildup, anticipated major military operation, lengthy campaign, significant resistance, high potential casualties ⇒ time permitting, limited open coverage from the start

This example only starts to address flexible criteria necessary to distinguish between stages, but suggests the system which military commanders, PAOs and media executives would use to categorize progressive press access rules.

Pool arrangements should be modified -- press should be guaranteed access to the initial stage of hostilities, but immediately assigned to units on arrival. The military must facilitate state of the art communications to aid in transmitting reports. All reports will be shared among desired users; this press pool fundamental requires scrutiny in determining the number of media necessary in a pool. Current pool arrangements focus on 14 -17

journalists, but this number requires independent transportation assets in almost all cases. NBC's pool representative Fred Francis wrote in a Panama after action report to the Pentagon, that the pool need only be composed of one print, one radio and one TV journalist, one video cameraman and one still photographer.[1] Five could be moved and linked to action in virtually all circumstances. The Joint Information Bureau, used in the Gulf, should be continued as a centralized reporting location, and for press management.

"Accreditation...is an important and necessary restriction."[2] Accreditation provides the only means of enforcing ground rules short of censorship. The threat of expulsion from the combat zone and revocation of credentials is the only control the military needs -- they must invest some trust in the journalist. Unfortunately, at least two dozen journalists lost their accreditation during Desert Storm, but many felt driven to their actions by the other controls.[3] These credentials should be required for access to U.S. troops, and arrangements must be made to accredit in-country media as soon as conditions permit.

Finally, I recommend the challenge be put to media leaders to contribute to the solution instead of the problem. The U.S. Navy's Chief of Information during the Gulf War wrote, "Surely common sense would tell news executives to reach some agreement among themselves to pool their future war coverage resources, and lessen their costs and the logistical demands on the military."[4] Where restrictions exist, the press adapts: Air Force One, White House Press Room, etc. -- I recommend an internally appointed media board of leaders to adjudicate equitable representation and balance the rules of access.

The solution to the 'numbers needed' problem is not insurmountable, but requires recognition from both sides of the responsibilities of the other. As former Air Force Chief of Staff General Dugan wrote after his media induced retirement, "Both the military and the media view themselves as professions. It would be a useful start if each viewed the other in the same light -- and acted accordingly."[5]

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[1]United States Southern Command, Public Affairs After Action Report "Operation Just Cause."
[2]Walter E. Boomer, "Censorship of the Press," Marine Corps Gazette, January 1988, p.18.
[3]Ray Eldon Hiebert, "Public Relations as a Weapon of Modern Warfare," Public Relations Review, Summer 1991, p.109.
[4]RAdm Brent Baker, "Last One in the Pool...," Proceedings, August 1991, p.71.
[5]Michael J. Dugan, "Generals vs. Journalists, Cont.," The New York Times, 24 May 1991, p.A31.

APPENDIX 1

SIDLE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Statement of Principle: The American people must be informed about United States military operations and this information can best be provided through both the news media and the Government. Therefore, the panel believes it is essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and the safety of U.S. forces.

1. That public affairs planning be conducted concurrently with operational planning. This can be assured in the great majority of cases by implementing the following:
a) Review all joint planning documents to assure that JCS guidance in public affairs matters is adequate.
b) When sending implementing orders to Commanders in Chief in the field, direct CINC planners to include consideration of public information aspects.
c) Inform the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) of an impending military operation at the earliest possible time. This information should appropriately come from the Secretary of Defense.
d) Complete the plan, currently being studied, to include a public affairs planning cell in OJCS to help ensure adequate public affairs review of CINC plans.
e) Insofar as possible and appropriate, institutionalize these steps in written guidance or policy.

2. When it becomes apparent during military operational planning that news media pooling provides the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an operation, planning should provide for the largest possible press pool that is practical and minimize the length of time the pool will be necessary before "full coverage" is feasible.

3. That, in connection with the use of the pools, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend to the Secretary of Defense that he study the matter of whether to use a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation or notification list of correspondents in case of a military operation for which a pool is required or the establishment of a news agency list for use in the same circumstances.

4. That a basic tenet covering media access to military operations should be voluntary compliance by the media with security guidelines or ground rules established and issued by the military. These rules should be as few as possible and should be worked out during the planning process for each operation.

5. Public affairs planning for military operations should include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel whose function is to assist correspondents in covering the operation adequately.

6. Planners should carefully consider media communications requirements to assure the earliest feasible availability. However, these communications must not interfere with combat and combat support operations. If necessary and feasible, plans should include communications facilities dedicated to the news media.

7. Planning factors should include provision for intra- and inter-theater transportation support of the media.

8. To improve media-military understanding and cooperation:
a) CJCS should recommend to SECDEF that a program be undertaken by ASD(PA) for top military public affairs representatives to meet with news organization leadership, to include meetings with individual news organizations, on a reasonably regular basis to discuss mutual problems, including relationships with the media during military operations and exercises. This program should begin as soon as possible.
b) Enlarge programs already underway to improve military understanding of the media via public affairs instruction in service schools, to include media participation when possible.
c) Seek improved media understanding of the military through more visits by commanders and line officers to news organizations.
d) CJCS should recommend that SECDEF host at an early date a working meeting with representatives of the broadcast news media to explore the special problems of ensuring military security when and if there is real-time or near real-time news media audiovisual coverage of a battlefield and, if special problems exist, how can they best be dealt with consistent with the basic principle set forth at the beginning of this section of the report.

APPENDIX 2

RECOMMENDATIONS RESULTING FROM DOD NATIONAL MEDIA POOL DEPLOYMENT IN OPERATION JUST CAUSE

As long as the pool is an officially sponsored mechanism, the Defense Department must be prepared to make it work right.

Accordingly, I (Mr. Fred Hoffman) offer the following recommendations:

1. SECDEF should issue a policy directive, to be circulated throughout the Department and the Armed Services, stating explicitly his official sponsorship of the media pool and requiring full support for it. The policy statement should make it clear to all that the pool must be given every assistance to report combat by U.S. troops from the start of operations.

2. All operational plans drafted by the joint staff must have an annex spelling out measures to assure that the pool will move with the lead elements of U.S. forces and cover the earliest stages of operations. This principle should be incorporated in overall public affairs plans.

3. A Deputy ASD(PA) should closely monitor development of operation-related public affairs plans to assure they fulfill all requirements for pool coverage. The ASD(PA) should review all such plans. In advance of military action, those plans should be briefed to SECDEF and CJCS along with the operation plans.

Public affairs staff officers and key staff personnel representing policy offices, such as International Security Affairs, should be brought into the planning process at the very earliest stage. The practice of keeping key staff officers with high security clearances out of the planning process in order to limit access to sensitive information should be followed only sparingly and eliminated where possible.

4. In the runup to a military operation, CJCS should send out a message ordering all commanders to give full cooperation to the media pool and its escorts. This requirement should be spelled out unambiguously and should reach down through all the echelons in the chain of command. Such a message should make clear that necessary resources, such as helicopters, ground vehicles, communications equipment, etc., must be earmarked specifically for pool use, that the pool must have ready access to the earliest action and that the safety of the pool members must not be used as a reason to keep the pool from action.

5. The ASD(PA) must be prepared to weigh in aggressively with SECDEF and CJCS where necessary to overcome any secrecy of other obstacles blocking prompt deployment of a pool to the scene of action.

6. After a pool has been deployed, the ASD(PA) must be kept informed in a timely fashion of any hitches that may arise. He must be prepared to act immediately, to contact CJCS, the Joint Staff Director of Operations and other senior officers who can serve to break through any obstacles to the pool. The ASD(PA) should call on SECDEF for help as needed.

7. The ASD(PA) should study a proposal by several of the Panama poolers that future pools deploy in two sections. The first section would be very small and would include only reporters and photographers. The second section, coming later, would bring in supporting gear, such as satellite up-link equipment.

8. The national media pool should never again be herded as a single unwieldy unit. It should be broken up after arriving at the scene of action to cover a wider spectrum of the story and then be reassembled periodically to share the reporting results.

9. The pool should be exercised at least once during each quarterly rotation with airborne and other types of military units most likely to be sent on emergency combat missions.

10. During deployments, there should be regular briefings for pool newsmen and newswomen by senior operations officers so the poolers will have an up-to-date and complete overview of the progress of an operation they are covering.

11. There is an urgent need for restructuring of the organization which has the responsibility for handling pool reports sent to the Pentagon for processing and distribution. The ASD(PA) must assure that there is adequate staffing and enough essential equipment to handle the task. The Director of Plans, so long as he has this responsibility, should clearly assign contingency duties among his staff to ensure timely handling of reports form the pool. Staffers from the Administration Office, Community Relations and other divisions of OASD(PA) should be mobilized to help in such a task as needed.

12. The ASD(PA) should give serious consideration to a suggestion by some of the pool members to create a new pool slot for an editor who would come to the Pentagon during a deployment to lend professional journalism help to the staff officers handling pool reports. Such a pool editor could edit copy, question content where indicated and help expedite distribution of the reports.

13. The pool escorting system needs overhauling as well. There is no logical reason for the Washington-based escorts to be drawn from the top of the OASD(PA) Plans Division. The head of that division should remain in Washington to oversee getting out the pool products.

Pool escorts should be drawn from the most appropriate service rather than limiting escort duty to officers of the Plans Division. The individual armed service public affairs offices should be required to assign military officers to the pool on a contingency basis. For example, if it's an Army operation, the escorts should be primarily Army officers. In the Panama deployment, the three Washington-based escorts wore Air Force and Navy uniforms in what was an overwhelmingly Army operation.

Escorts should deploy in field uniforms or draw them from field commands soon after arriving. The Panama pool escorts wore uniforms befitting a day behind the desk at the Pentagon and this, I found, had a jarring effect on the Army people with whom they dealt.

14. The ASD(PA) should close a major gap in the current system by requiring all pool participant organizations - whether print, still photo, TV or radio - to share all pool products with all elements of the news industry. Pool participants must understand they represent the entire industry.

Any pool participant refusing to share with all legitimate requesters should be dropped from the pool and replaced by another organization that agrees to abide by time honored pool practices.

15. There is merit in a suggestion by one of the pool photographers that participating news organizations share the cost of equipment, such as a portable dark room and a negative transmitter, which could be stored at Andrews AFB for ready access in a deployment. Other equipment essential for smooth transmission of pool products, such as satellite up-link gear, might also be acquired and stored in the same manner.

16. All pool-assigned reporters and photographers, not only bureau chiefs, should attend quarterly Pentagon sessions where problems can be discussed and rules and responsibilities underscored.

17. Public Affairs Officers from Unified Commands should meet periodically with pool-assigned reporters and photographers with whom they might have to work in some future crises.

APPENDIX 3

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES (RULES ON MEDIA ACCESS)

1. Open and independent reporting will be the principle means of coverage of U.S. military operations.

2. Pools are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. Pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity -- within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those extremely remote locations or where space is limited.

4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.

5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special Operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.

6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.

7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever feasible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.

8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military will supply PAOs with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means available. The military will not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing DoD National Media Pool system.

Note: News organizations and the military could not agree on a principle, proposed by the news organizations, regarding security review.

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